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ABSTRACT

The Asian American Communications In-School Staff and Parent Workshops (A-AC) provided three phases of on-site workshops on Asian cultures for personnel in New York City schools with large Asian student populations, and also provided related support services upon request. Phase I workshops were based on a needs survey, Phase II workshops were follow-up workshops, and Phase III workshops provided information on Chinese American history and literature upon request. Evaluation information included questionnaires completed by workshop participants and telephone interviews with principals and workshop participants from 11 of the 47 schools receiving services in 1989-90. A-AC met its objectives of conducting a pre-Phase I needs assessment, providing 40 Phase I workshops and 20 Phase II workshops, and offering Phase III workshops and follow-up services upon request. It partially met its objective of providing parent workshops on request due to insufficient staff. The project should reevaluate its involvement in providing support services, given the low level of need expressed by the schools. (FMW)

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OREA Report

ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS IN-SCHOOL STAFF AND PARENT WORKSHOPS (A-AC)

1989-90

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

UD 028 029

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ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS
IN-SCHOOL STAFF AND PARENT WORKSHOPS
(A-AC)

1989-90

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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8/90

ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS
IN-SCHOOL STAFF AND PARENT WORKSHOPS
(A-AC)
1989-90

SUMMARY

- Asian-American Communications In-School Staff and Parent Workshops (A-AC) was fully implemented. During the 1989-90 school year, the program provided school personnel with three phases of on-site workshops on Asian cultures. In addition, the program provided related support services upon request.

- The program met its objectives of conducting a pre-Phase I workshop assessment, presenting a positively evaluated Phase I workshop in 40 schools and Phase II workshops in 20 schools, and offering Phase III workshops and follow-up services on request. It partially met the objective for providing parent workshops on request.

A-AC was in its second year of funding by the Board of Education, Division of Funded Programs. A-AC provided workshops on Asian cultures for schools with large Asian populations. Phase I workshops were based on a needs survey, Phase II provided follow-up workshops, and Phase III provided workshops on Chinese-American history and literature upon request. The program conducted approximately 40 Phase I and 20 Phase II workshops.

A-AC conveyed information on Asian cultures in order to enhance the understanding and sensitivity of teachers and other school personnel. The program conducted 61 workshops in 47 schools and provided follow-up services upon request. It also sought to serve as a resource to mediate specific problems of Asian-American students.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Re-evaluate project involvement in providing support services, given the low level of need expressed by schools.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of Asian-American Communications In-School Staff and Parent Workshops (A-AC). The project has been providing services since 1985 but was in its second year of funding by the Board of Education's Division of Funded Program. A-AC provided workshops on Asian cultures for schools with large Asian populations. Phase I workshops were based on a needs survey, Phase II provided follow-up workshops, and Phase III provided workshops on Chinese-American history and literature upon request.

Workshop participants included all levels of school personnel--teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, and administrators. Upon request, A-AC also provided translation, mediation, referral, and other direct services to students and their families.

STAFF

A-AC staff consisted of a director and an assistant coordinator. The project trained graduate students from Teachers College and Columbia University to conduct workshops. A-AC used consultants to provide expertise in specific Asian cultures and for translation and other service needs.

Because there was a six month delay in the receipt of funds the project was unable to pay staff until March, 1990. For that reason, personnel left to seek other employment. For much of the time, the assistant coordinator position was unfilled.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A-AC and OREA designed an evaluation instrument for workshop participants, but it was not implemented until December; the project used the previous year's form until then. Since the forms were not comparable, data are presented separately for each period of time. OREA received 839 project-designed forms and 1,189 OREA-A-AC forms. Since the forms were completed voluntarily, not all participants chose to respond. Therefore, a potential self-selection bias exists: participants who were especially positive or negative may have been more likely to complete the form.

OREA staff gathered qualitative information through interviews with the project director and observations of workshops. In addition, OREA conducted phone interviews with principals and other workshop participants from 11 of the 47 schools. For these interviews, OREA selected a cross-section of school types and times of the year when the program workshop was presented.

III. OUTCOMES

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Phase I

- To conduct an assessment prior to the workshop at each of the 40 participating schools.

In its Phase I operation, Asian-American Communications initiated contact with schools through a letter offering a

workshop and follow-up services. Interested schools completed a survey form designed to gather information on student and faculty characteristics and the school's specific needs. A-AC staff visited each school. These visits usually involved an entire day and included brief interviews with about 40 students (a parental consent form was required for each). The project director met with the principal, guidance counselor, and School Based Support Team.

A-AC met its first Phase I objective.

- To provide a 25- to 35-minute workshop with question-and-answer period for 20 to 100 faculty in each school.

The workshops, generally conducted at a faculty conference, focused on the identified needs. A-AC provided Phase I workshops at 40 schools. Workshops lasted 25 to 35 minutes. Attendance ranged from 11 to 75 participants.

A-AC met its second Phase I objective.

Phase II

- To provide a 20 to 30-minute workshop for 20 to 100 faculty at 20 schools involving case discussions and/or question-and-answer discussions.

The project conducted a Phase II workshop in 20 schools. In these workshops the project provided more intensive sessions for the schools than in the previous phase. Some schools held more than one session. Phase II workshops addressed the need expressed in the previous year for presenting specific strategies for classroom use. The project's initial plan to involve participants in discussions about their own situations proved

unsuccessful. Therefore, the speaker sought to engage participants in question-and-answer discussions, and workshops were deliberately limited in size to allow time for this.

A-AC met its Phase II workshop objective.

Phase III

- To provide a workshop on Chinese-American history and literature upon request.

A-AC conducted one Phase III workshop that focused on Chinese-American history and literature. The entire staff of 85 teachers and 19 paraprofessionals attended. The speaker discussed various Asian customs and practices and handed out extensive written materials.

A-AC met its Phase III objective.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Workshop participants reported that the workshop they attended focused on their concerns and that the speaker was well prepared and dynamic. The A-AC project director reported that by making prior arrangements with principals, time availability was improved over the previous year. Participants, however, still felt that they did not have enough time for questions.

Sixty percent of the participants rated the relevance of the workshop as high. Eighty-four percent of the respondents rated their knowledge as having increased as a result of the workshop; 70 percent of those who had little knowledge prior to the workshop indicated a substantial increase in knowledge as a result of the sessions. Overall satisfaction was rated high by

over 60 percent of participants. Participants who had more years of teaching experience evaluated the sessions more positively than those with less experience.

FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

- To provide related services upon request.

Requests for support services were limited, but when received, A-AC provided services in translation, mediation, and crisis intervention.

The project met its objective for follow-up services.

PARENT WORKSHOPS

- To provide parent workshops upon request.

The project director reported that A-AC conducted five workshops for parents but had to turn down other requests due to insufficient staff. The project director felt that an anticipated newsletter would accomplish the task of disseminating information in a more cost-effective manner.

A-AC only partially met its objective for providing parent workshops upon request.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

A-AC successfully met its staff development objectives for the 1989-90 year. A-AC conducted Phase I workshops in 40 schools, Phase II workshops in 20 schools, and one Phase III workshop. The project carried out a thorough needs assessment

prior to Phase I workshops. As was true last year, workshop participants rated the sessions very favorably.

Previous complaints of inadequate discussion time were addressed through negotiation of the workshop agenda with principals, breaking sessions into smaller groups, and the implementation of more intensive Phase II workshops.

A-AC encountered staffing difficulties because it did not receive its funds until March and was unable to pay personnel until that date. This prevented the project from providing the number of workshops requested by parents.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Re-evaluate project involvement in providing support services, given the low level of need expressed by schools.